

CHAPTER 1

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Highway 89, northern gateway to Tucson, 1939.

INTRODUCTION

Historically, planning and the resulting plans have helped shape cities. The focus of early plans ranged from roadway systems to move citizens and troops, to parcel development with a focus on land speculation, to grand avenues and plazas to celebrate the nation's greatness. In the nineteenth century, the large number of people arriving in America

seeking a better life put a strain on city living conditions. In response, planning broadened to address substandard conditions through such means as tenement law, sanitation systems, and open space provision. Planning expanded in the twentieth century to include zoning and subdivision regulations with the intention of improving urban conditions through controlling how land was used. The return of troops at the end of World War II and the popularity of the automobile spurred the growth of cities outward. Affected cities sought solutions to the impacts of sprawl through planning. Today, using tools such as general plans, cities continue to focus on improving the urban environment with an increasing understanding of the dynamic interrelationship of citizens' values, city form and function, and technical information.

The current Arizona State requirements for general plans are based on the Growing Smarter Act, which became effective on August 21, 1998. On May 18, 2000, Growing Smarter Plus became law. The Act requires cities and counties to address issues associated with urban growth and development and specified several additional elements for inclusion in cities' general plans. Plan Tucson addresses the required elements, as well as other topics of increasing importance to the community in recent years.

Plan Purpose & Use

Plan Tucson replaces the General Plan adopted by Mayor and Council and ratified by the voters in 2001. State law requires that every ten years, a jurisdiction revisit its existing general plan and either readopt that plan or adopt a new plan.¹ The City chose to

¹In June 2010, the Arizona Legislature passed House Bill 2145, which extended the deadline for readopting an existing general plan or adopting a new general plan until July 1, 2015.

prepare a new plan because it provided an opportunity to take a look at how Tucson has been developing socially, economically, environmentally, and physically since 2001 and to determine if that development has been consistent with community values, demographic trends, and best practices. Plan Tucson is a long-term policy document intended to guide decisions affecting elements that shape the city, such as housing, jobs, land use, transportation, water, and energy resources. Key to the Plan are goals and policies that provide a framework to guide future actions with the understanding that how the City has grown in the past will not necessarily work in the future. Used to best advantage, the Plan provides both a place to start and a place to end for the public, staff, and decision makers involved in developing or approving actions. That is, those proposing actions should do so with the Plan Tucson goals and policies in mind, and those reviewing proposed actions should assess whether the actions do in fact advance the Plan's goals and policies.

Plan Organization

Plan Tucson consists of four chapters. This first chapter provides background on the Plan, while Chapter 2 highlights the historic and contemporary context for the Plan, including a look at

community and governmental initiatives in recent years that served as stepping stones into Plan Tucson. Chapter 3, which presents goals and policies for Tucson's future, is the cornerstone of the Plan. The goals

and policies are categorized into three focus areas: the Social and Economic Environment, the Natural Environment, and the Built Environment. Each focus area begins with a set of goals, and is followed by related elements and policies. Chapter 4 describes how the Plan is administered and implemented. The document concludes with a glossary. Four appendices, which are listed in the Table of Contents and provided under separate cover, round out the Plan.

Element Integration

A key emphasis of this Plan is the integrative nature of the elements addressed. While government departments and offices generally focus on specific functions such as housing, water, and transportation, effective community building requires constant consideration of how these functions relate to each other, can strengthen each other, or may conflict with each other. To highlight this point, each element narrative references City entities with key roles in that element, and a table is included at the end of each set of policies that references relevant policies from other Plan elements. Finally, to acknowledge the particular interrelationship of land use, transportation, and urban design, these three elements are presented together in one section.

Public Participation

Public participation is critical to the identification of issues about which the community cares and should be considered in any planning effort. Participation provides an opportunity for education of and input and feedback from the general public and stakeholders; for recognition and acknowledgment of shared values; for identification of opportunities and constraints; for collaborative development of goals

**Geronimo Plaza,
University Boulevard,
2011.**



and policies; and for evaluation and comparison of alternative scenarios and selection of a preferred scenario. The importance of public participation to not only Plan Tucson, but to City of Tucson planning, program, and project development in general is confirmed by its inclusion in the section on Governance and Participation in Chapter 3 of this document.

Growing Smarter legislation recognizes the importance of public participation, and Arizona State Law lays out requirements for participation in Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) Section 9-461.06. This section specifies that a written program laying out how public participation will be undertaken in the development of the General Plan be developed and approved by Mayor and Council. The written program that was used in undertaking public participation for Plan Tucson was approved by Mayor and Council on March 22, 2011 (Resolution No. 21705). The Public Participation Program is provided as an appendix to this Plan. Program activities include:

- 6 general public introductory meetings in six different geographic locations throughout Tucson
- 2 stakeholder orientation meetings focused on challenges and opportunities
- 39 Policy Working Groups at which interactive processes were used with stakeholders, including not-for-profit organizations, institutions, and governmental agencies, as well as with members of the general public to identify ideas for policies
- 2 Policy Forums at which results of the Policy Working Groups were presented and feedback sought through oral and written comment from the public
- 5 Community Workshops held in five different geographic locations of Tucson to provide information



Participants map their ideas for future land use and connections at a 2012 Plan Tucson Community Workshop.

on growth projections and national demographic and housing trends, to consider two alternative growth scenarios, and to develop additional scenarios

- 5 Open Houses to present the Draft Plan, solicit feedback, and answer questions
- 19 on-request presentations
- Plan Tucson website with information on Plan Tucson activities and progress, working documents, meeting agendas and meeting summaries, as well as a Facebook page and comment opportunities
- Planning Commission and Mayor and Council public hearings (A.R.S. 9-461.00)
- Inclusion of Plan on ballot for ratification by voters (A.R.S. 9-461.06).

Mandated Elements

The elements mandated by A.R.S. Section 9-461.06 for inclusion in general plans are addressed in the Social and Environment, the Natural Environment, and the Built Environment sections of Chapter 3. Reference to the particular required elements covered in each section is included in the last paragraph of the introductory narrative preceding the goals. See Appendices for Mandated Elements Matrix.